DJANGO REINHARDI ANTHOLOGY

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Mike Peters, guitarist and student of Eddie Lang and Django Reinhardt, met Joe Venuti in 1974. This led to a unique friendship which lasted until the Maestro's final days in August, 1978. He performed with Venuti from 1976 to 1978. For three years Mike led Jazz A Cordes, a swinging string quintet, featuring guitarist Carmen Mastren. Since 1981, Mike has toured and recorded with Bob Wilber, while also recording and performing with his away group. Diango's Music.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR—Dan Fox

TRANSCRIBED AND EDITED by Mike Peters

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Throughout the 1930s, this late cabaret hostess provided Parisian high society and European royalty with a posh watering hole (Bricktop's). The QHCF performed for her distinguished clientele (Ernest Hemingway, Noel Coward, F. Scott Fitzgerald) at various times. The original 1937 recording remains unissued. (Recorded March 10, 1948/Swing)



This is the kind of material which made and still makes the QHCF a great swing band. This swinging tune owes its conception to the influence of Louis Armstrong. His recordings and subsequent tours of Europe in 1933 and 1934 were the initial source of inspiration for Django and Stephane, as well as the English/European jazz scene in general. (Recorded January 31, 1938/Decca)

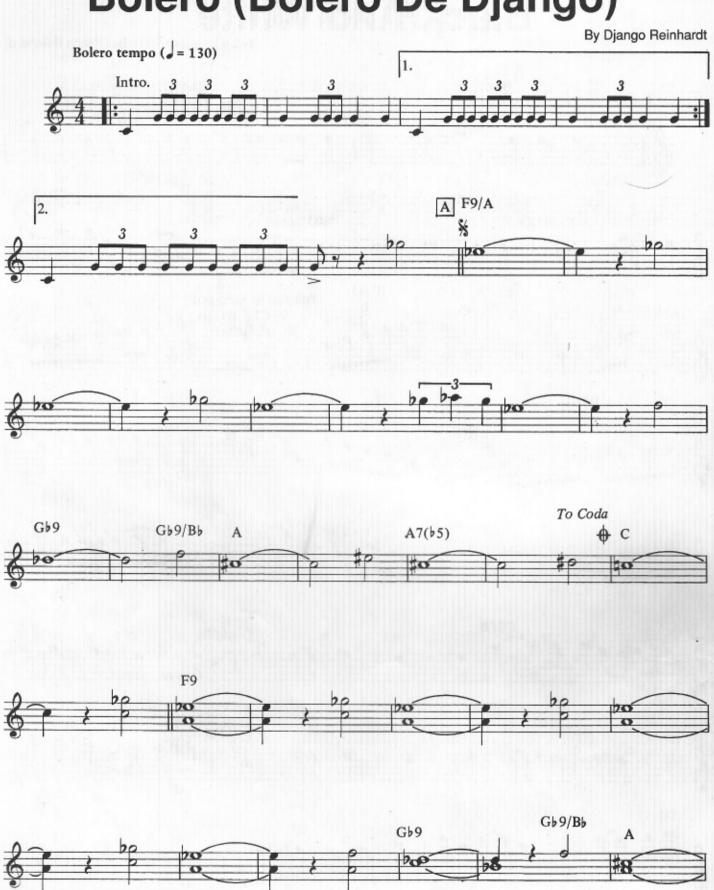
Black And White

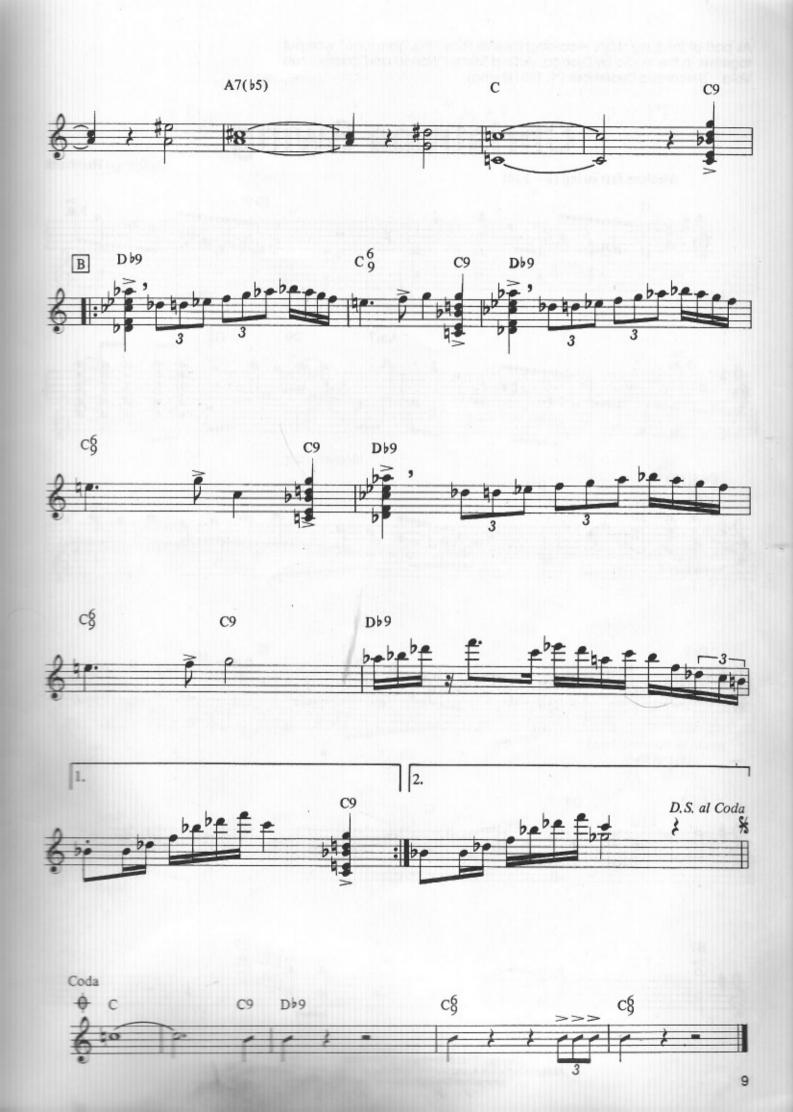
By Django Reinhardt



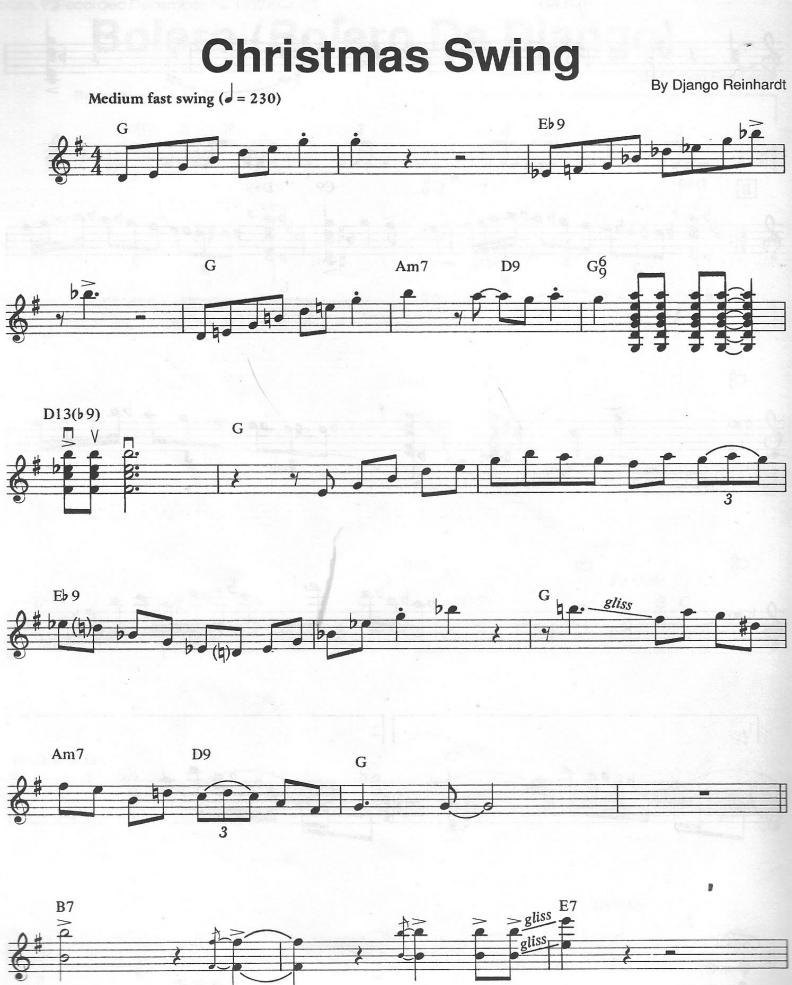
Performed at the Salle Pleyel in the winter of 1941, along with Ravel's *Bolero* and Debussy's *Fetes*, this concert piece for symphony orchestra was originally recorded in 1937, in an abridged form by a group of fourteen musicians. (Recorded December 14, 1937/Swing)

Bolero (Bolero De Django)





As part of the long day's recording (twelve titles), this "jam tune" was put together in the studio by Django, violinist Michel Warlop and bassist Louis Vola. (Recorded December 21, 1937/Swing)

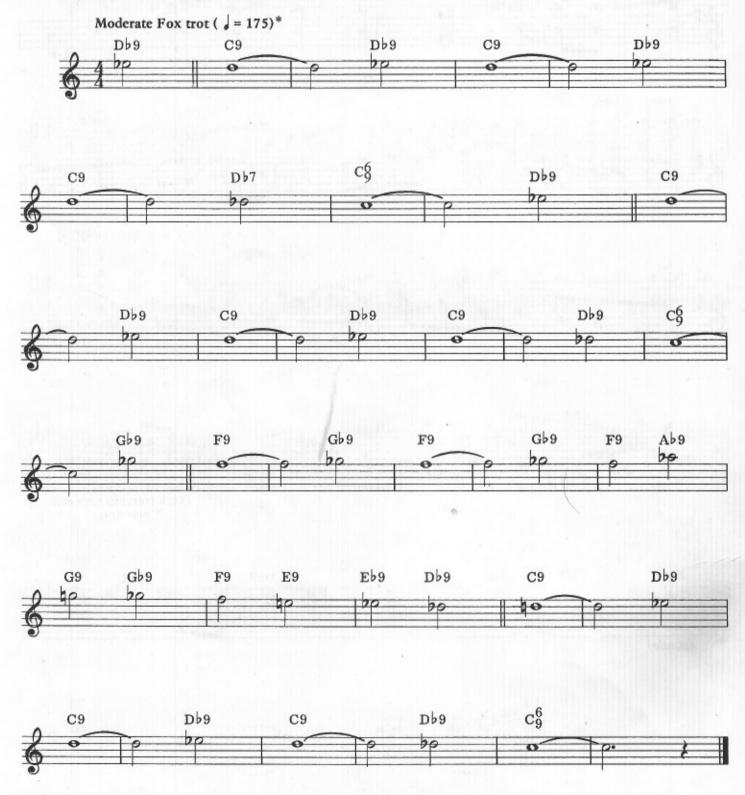




Composed and recorded with Grappelli and the QHCF, the original version remains unissued. In 1943, Django re-recorded it with his new QHCF, augmented by the two clarinets of Andre Luis and Gerard Leveque. This bluesy, chromatic melody possesses an unusual, somewhat exotic flavor. (Recorded February 17, 1943/Swing)

Cavalerie

By Django Reinhardt



^{* 16} bar intro omitted

This simple but very effective bounce tune was recorded and performed numerous times by Django through the 1930s and 1940s. It remains one of the most popular Reinhardt/Grappelli compositions to date. (Recorded January 31, 1938/Decca)



A celebration of the Reinhardt legacy and one of his earliest compositions. Django performed it in various settings. In 1942, while on a tour of Belgium, he recorded it with a big band, augmented by a string section. (Recorded September 1935/Ultraphone)



One of nine improvisations composed for solo guitar. Though different in form and texture, they all contain traces of classical and jazz influences, founded upon his romantic, often fiery gypsy heritage. Recorded in the summer of 1939, Django's fourth improvisation is a bow towards Spain. (Recorded June 30, 1939/Swing)





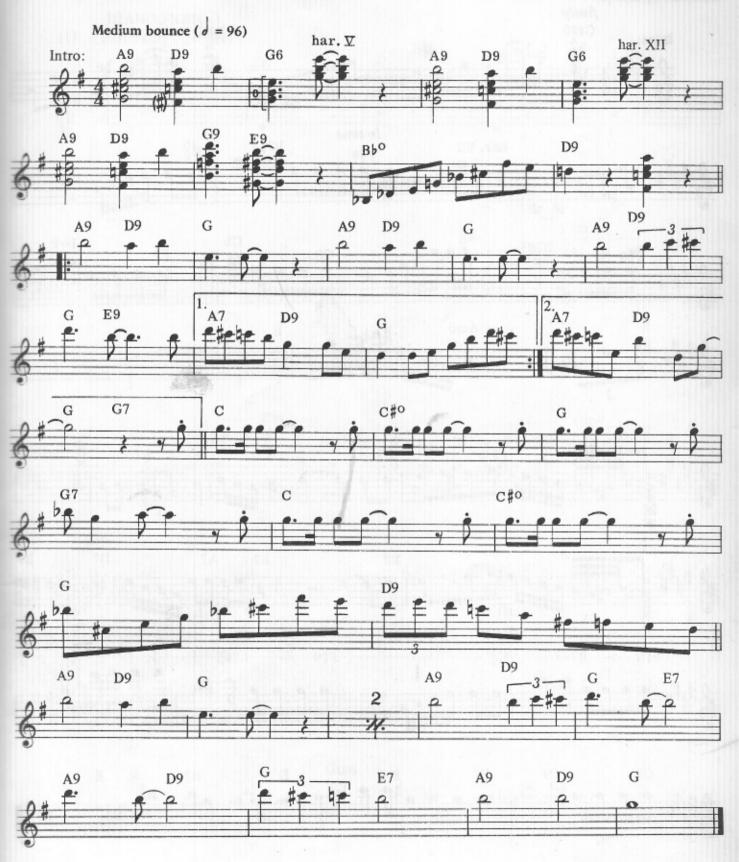


A twelve bar blues, teaming Grappelli and Eddie South in a violin show-down. Django's solo (2 choruses), starting in octaves, develops into some very Louis Armstrong type phrasing. It's a study in endurance, considering the accompaniment the two fiddlers plague him with. (Recorded November 25, 1937/Swing)



H.C.Q. Strut

By Django Reinhardt



An exercise in melody playing. Beautifully interpreted by Django and Stephane, the all string ensemble provides the perfect finishing touch. Evening music to beckon her to the balcony. The first sixteen are lazy, but the middle eight are eager. (Recorded December 14, 1937/Swing)



In this tune, based on the 1930 recording by Louis Armstrong, Django and company pay tribute to Satchmo. This recording is unique in that Django's solo is separated from Grappelli's very Armstrong style excursion, by Django asking the other Hot-Club members if bassist Louis Vola would like a solo. Viva Django. . . (Recorded January 31, 1938/Decca)

My Sweet

By Django Reinhardt

DJANGO'S SOLO

(1) Fast Swing (= 288)







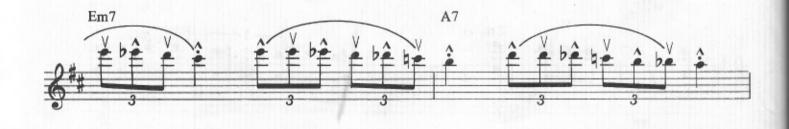














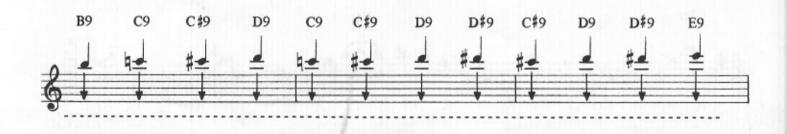


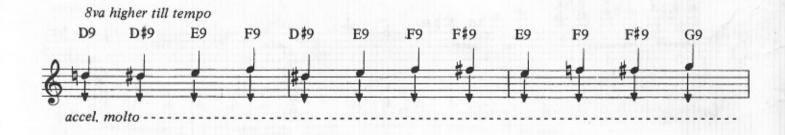


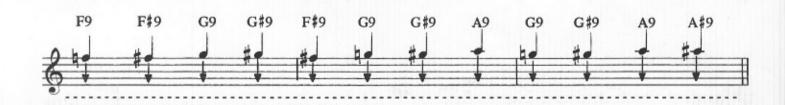
Django and Stephane soar at these tempos, particularly Django, who seems unphased by the physically demanding nature of this piece. The rolling thunder of his rhythm playing, the unbroken transition from chords to single string solo, back to chords, as well as his powerful, driving presence guides the band through this tour de force. All aboard the Reinhardt express. (Recorded April 26, 1937/Swing)

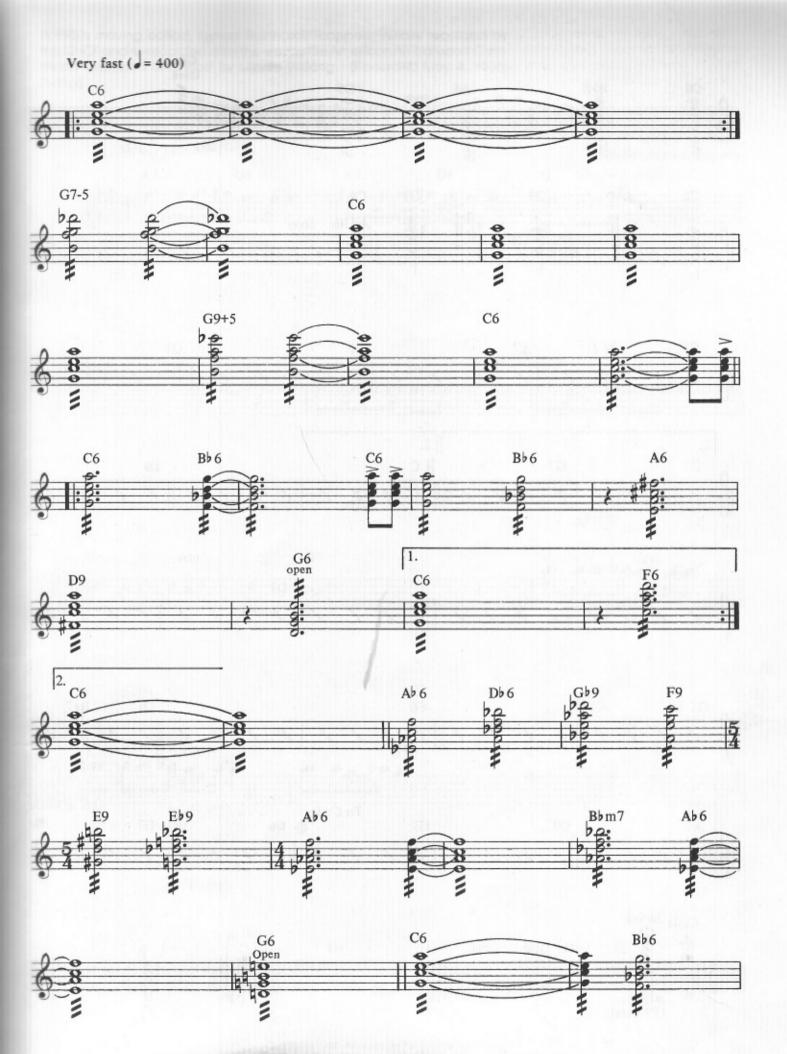






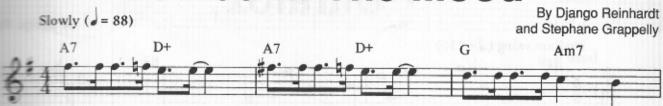




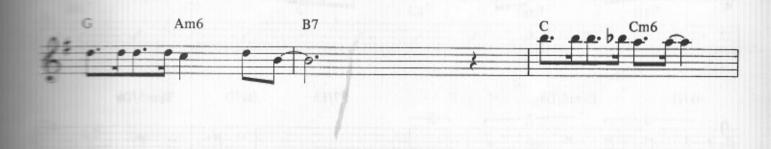


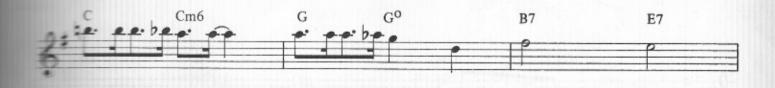


Are You In The Mood



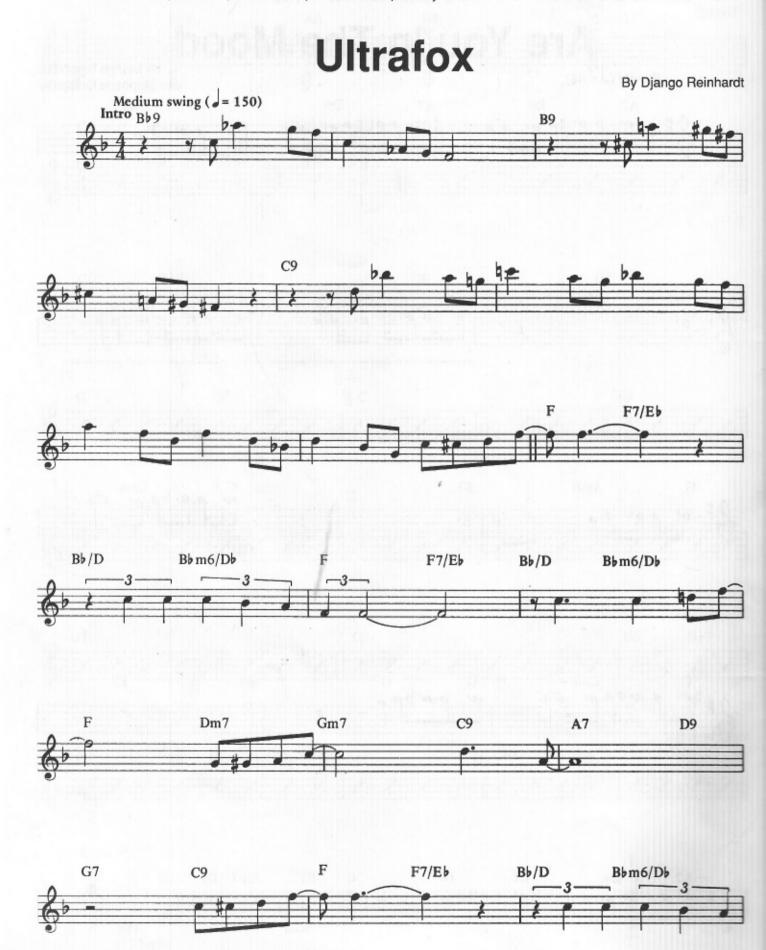


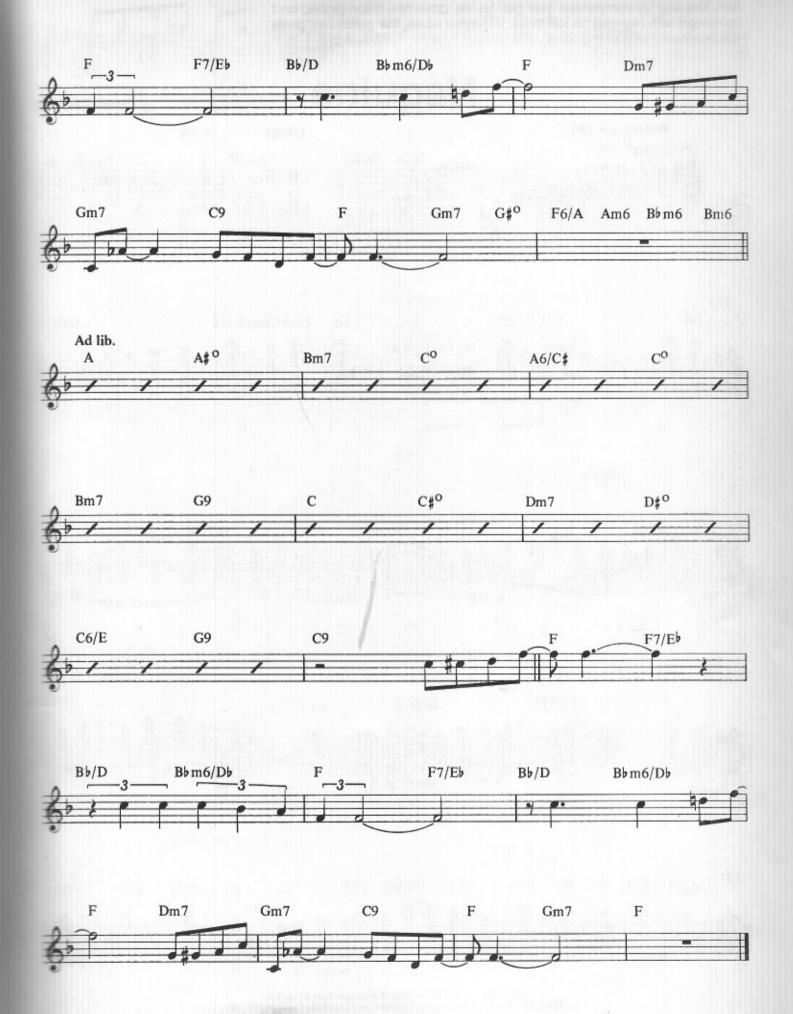






This is the first Reinhardt/Grappelli composition to be recorded. At the time, Ultraphone felt it was taking a chance on recording the all string swing ensemble. Little did they know. (Recorded April 1935/Ultraphone)





She was Django's wife, and probably the only person to really understand him. She was his companion over half his life, gave him a son (Babik) and remained with him until his last days. Though a blues, this guitar solo gives the impression of a loving song. (Recorded June 30, 1939/Swing)

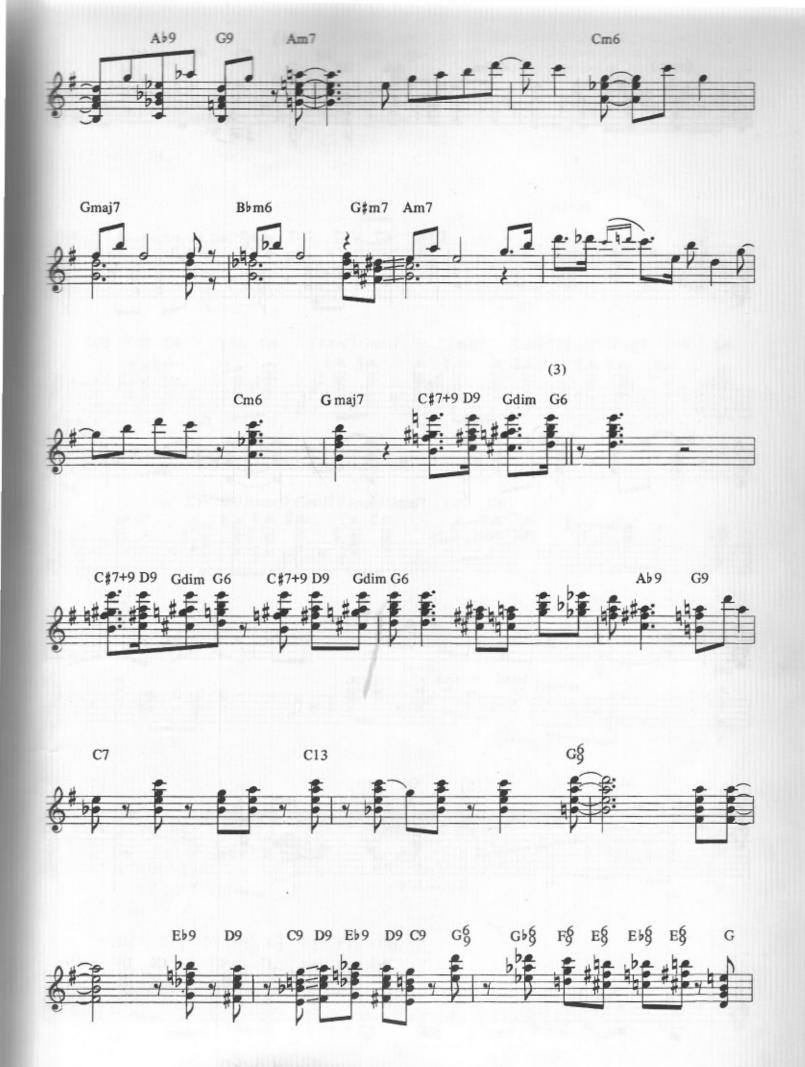














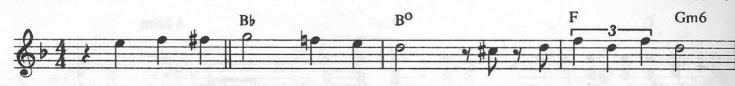


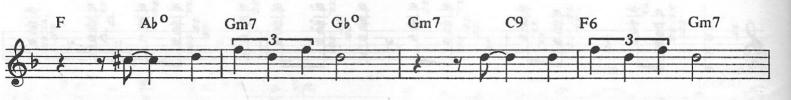
Django's two choruses (in this tune created from an eight bar turnaround) display his graceful and melodic sense of phrasing, enhanced by his sensitive choice of slurs, slides and soulful bends. (Recorded December 7, 1937/Swing)

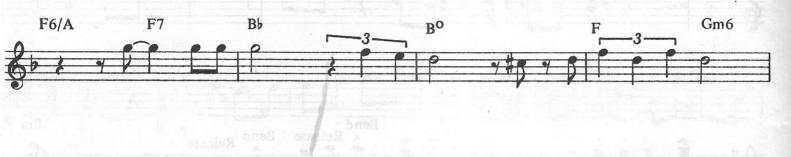
Paramount Stomp

Medium swing (= 170)

By Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelly

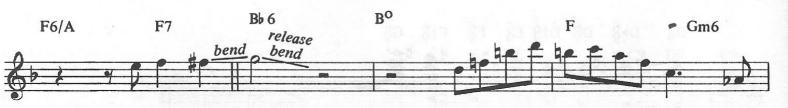


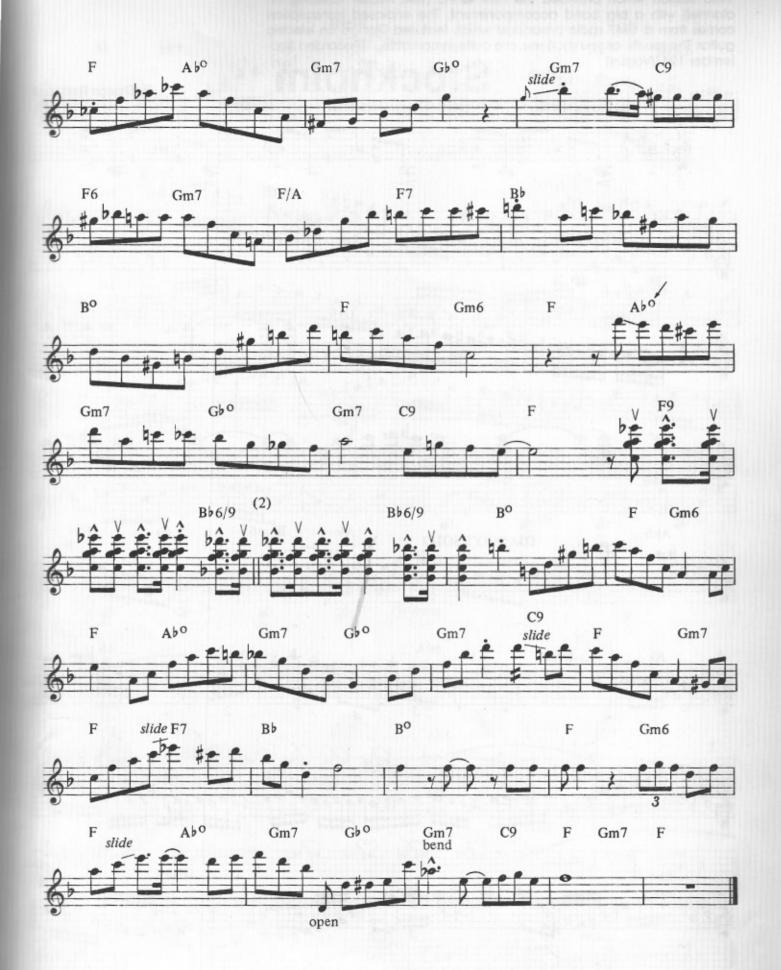




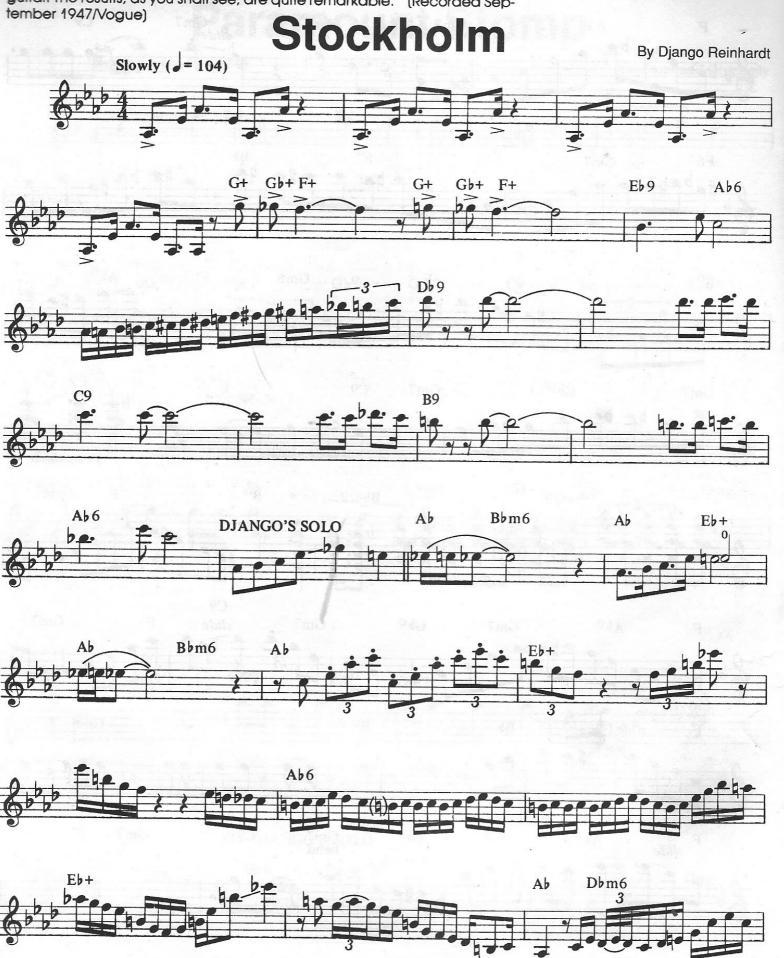


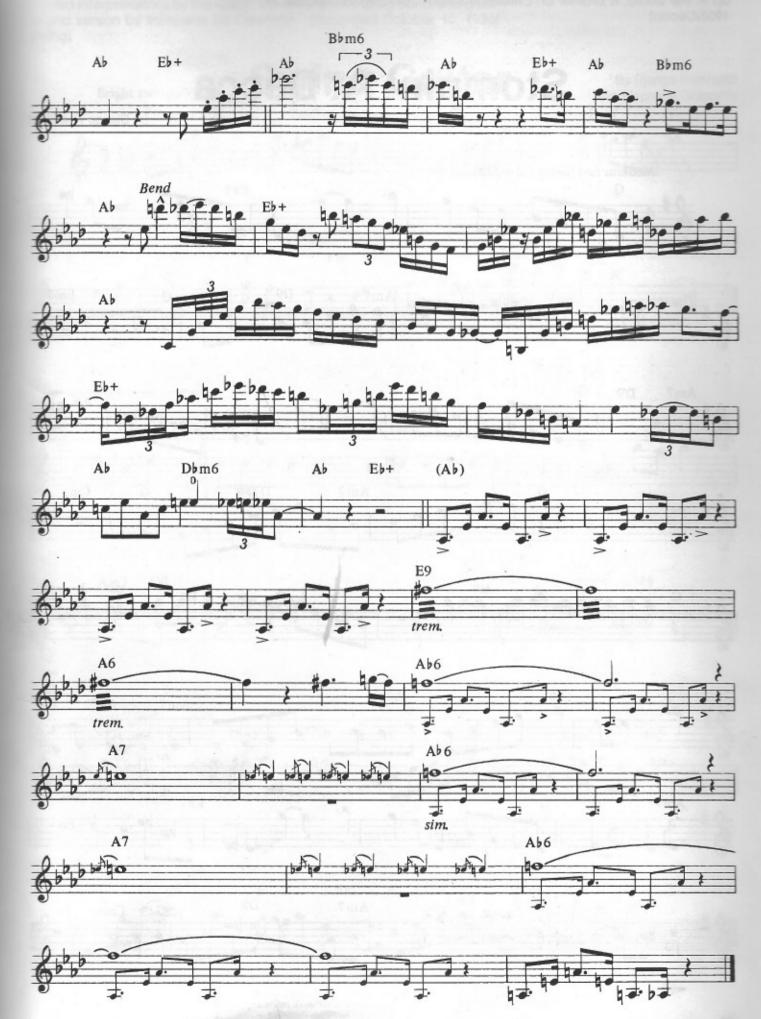
(1) DJANGO'S SOLO





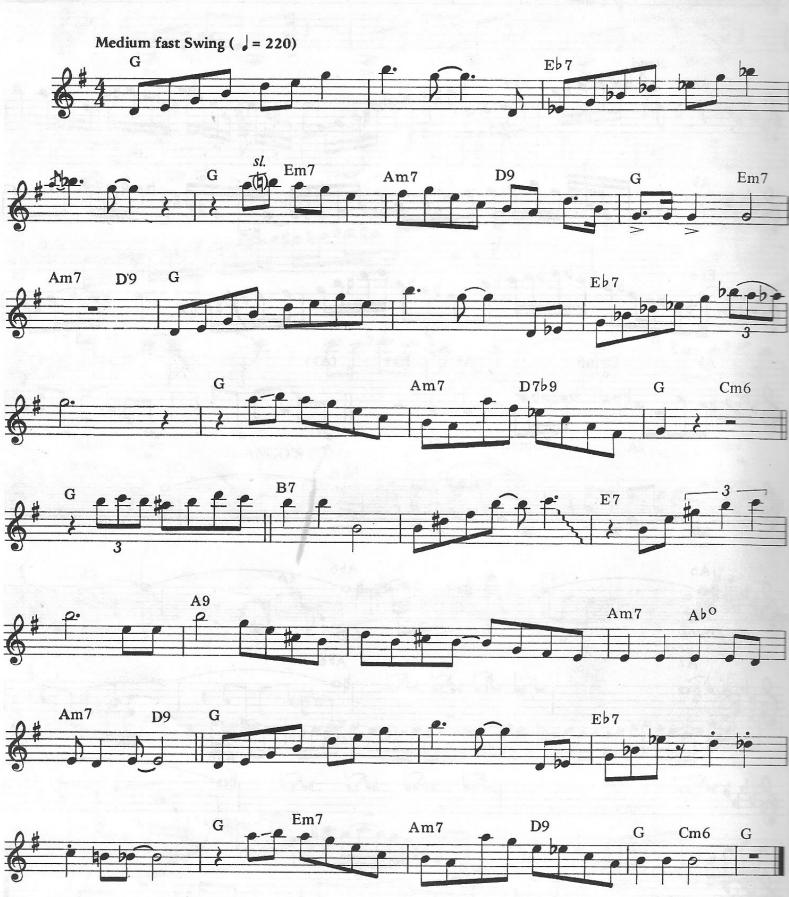
Inspired by a tour of Sweden in February 1939, Stockholm was recorded by the QHFC in June of that year. Its most interesting interpretation comes from a 1940 session which provided the new QHFC (with Hubert Rostaing on clarinet) with a big band accompaniment. The enclosed transcription comes from a 1947 radio broadcast which featured Django on electric guitar. The results, as you shall see, are quite remarkable. (Recorded September 1947/Voque)





Stompin' At Decca

By Django Reinhard

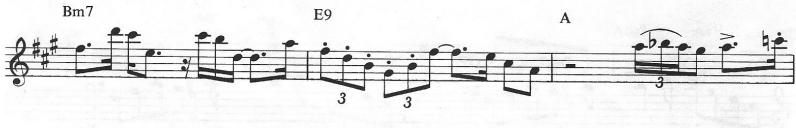


Plus one violin and bass. Recorded five times thru the 1930s and 40s, it received interpretations by the QHCF, the American ATC Big Band and a Dixieland version by trumpeter Bill Coleman. (Recorded October 15, 1936/ Swing)



With nearly a thousand recordings and one hundred compositions to his credit, this is one of those gems that unfortunately gets lost in the shuffle, or, in this case, the collection. Keep an eye on the chord progression in the second eight bars. (Recorded January 31, 1938/Decca)









As soon as you hear that bass intro, you know where you are—Paris, ah yes, 1938 vintage I believe. Jazz riffs come and go, but this one still holds its own, aided by a descending chord pattern that can't help but swing. (Recorded June 14, 1935/Decca)



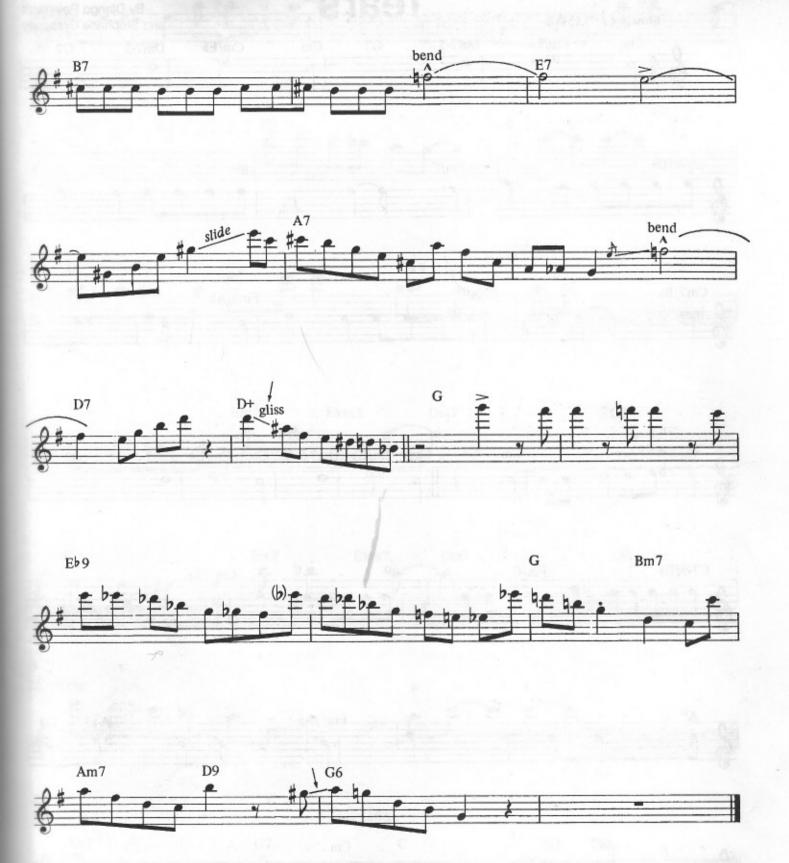




Django has the intro and first solo chorus on this number, which is based upon the same chord sequence as used in Stompin' at Decca and Christmas Swing. A comparison of the three recordings, all recorded within two months of each other, is a study in Djangology. (Recorded December 7, 1937/Swing)

Swinging With Django





Tears of sadness, tears of joy. A minor to major ballad and one of the first in which Django used finger style picking instead of a plectrum. (Recorded April 21, 1937/Swing)





This simple melody and chord progression is just an excuse for a classic Reinhardtimprovisation. Django had a special preference for minor themes and they always seemed to bring out that little extra in him. (Recorded November 25, 1937/Swing)







One of their earliest examples of ballad writing. It's a shame this has no lyrics (only on a few tunes do words accompany the music). The 1936 and 1947 versions of *Sweet Chorus* are an interesting study of interpretation and maturity. (Recorded October 15, 1936/Swing)

Sweet Chorus



Friday, December thirteenth, proved to be Django's most productive recording day of the 1940's. Of the ten titles waxed, four were Reinhardt compositions and two were adaptations of classical melodies. *Vendredi* is open season for improvisation. With the exception of Hubert Rostaings opening phrase and the last chorus riff, not a trace of melody is to be found. (Recorded December 13, 1940/Swing)



Belleville was composed and recorded at the height of popularity Django and the QHCF were to enjoy in the 1940's. When not working very often twice a day at the most prestigous cabarets and theatres in Paris, they toured the surrounding provinces and neighboring countries. The middle eight is inspired Reinhardt. (Recorded March 31, 1942/Swing)



Django recorded this minor blues four times. In the first and second choruses, he reworks his famous minor theme (those twenty-four bars are present in varied forms on all four versions). The three ensuing choruses are inundated with typical Reinhardt passion—long, graceful lines, tremolo chords and octaves all contributing to sixty bars of brilliant, cohesive improvisation. (Recorded November 1947/Vogue)





Three of Django's six choruses are included. One of the predominant effects he used in this blues is quarter, eighth and sixteenth note triplet phrases. They gracefully glide over the four to the bar rhythm, as Django swings the blues. Compare this 1943 version to its 1947 counterpart. (Recorded February 26, 1943/Swing)



The recordings of 1940 show Django entering yet another phase in the development of his masterful skills of improvisation. The definition and velocity of his improvised lines remain breathtaking and his seemingly endless stream of Ideas are now aided by a subtle, more relaxed approach to his instrument. (Recorded October 1, 1940/Swing)



































The twenty-six sides recorded by the QHCF from 1940–43 added new scope to the predominant sounds of swing and big band jazz. Subtle in texture, unique in repertoire, their music presented the lighter side of swing. *Crepuscle* is another of Django's exquisite marriages of melody and harmony (Recorded March 12, 1941/Swing)





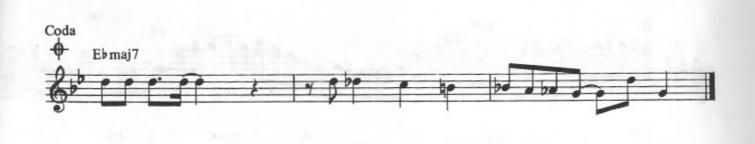
Enhanced by the use of two clarinets, this gypsy swing original captures yet another Reinhardt mood. The minor theme combined with the easy, flowing chords made it an ideal exercise for Django's graceful improvisation. Of the four titles produced at this session, three were Reinhardt compositions. (Recorded February 17, 1943/Swing)

Douce Ambiance

By Django Reinhardt











Suave and sophisticated, *Dinette* is one of a handful of compositions that made the early 1940s edition of the QHCF the most popular. Though the chords used for the solo are based on the American pop song, *Dinah*, *Dinette* is all Django, Intense, soothing chamber swing. (Recorded February 12, 1941/Swing)

Dinette

By Django Reinhardt .



Bolero and tango rhythms were used quite extensively in European popular songs of the 1920s, 30s and 40s. In Django's formative years he came into contact with and performed these rhythms often, so it is no surprise that they eventually surfaced (in this case, the tango) in his own compositions. Though listless, this moving melody is all the same a beautiful rhythmic theme. (Recorded February 26, 1943/Swing)

Fleur d'Ennui

By Django Reinhardt



One of the four concert pieces he composed—the others were *Bolero*, *Nympheas* and *Stockholm*. From 1940 through 1944, Django was surrounded by the sounds of big bands. We find him utilizing this orchestral setting to express his new ideas and enhance the color of these works. *Feerie* is uptempo, big band swing, highlighted by call and answer responses between the brass and reeds, with some very unique orchestral writing throughout. (Recorded March 31, 1941/Swing)







Once Paris was liberated, the warnings of air raid sirens and the subsequent bombings became less of an occurence. Up until that time, Django had definite plans as to where he preferred to live—and that was as close to the shelters as possible, many times in them. Recorded by his big band (Django's Music), Heavy Artillery is extremely reminiscent of Erskine Hawkins', Tuxedo Junction. (Recorded November 3, 1944/Swing)

Artillerie Lourde (Heavy Artillery)

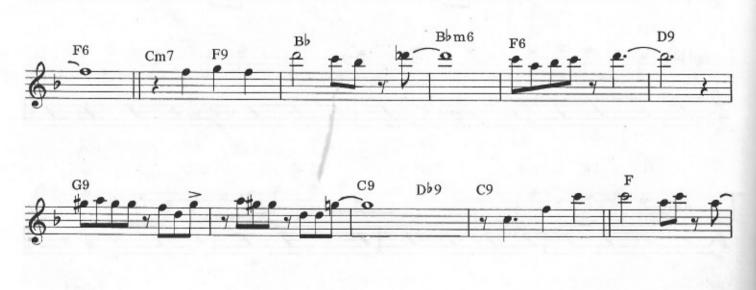


Of the four recording sessions held in 1943, two were big band dates. Django is remarkably at ease in the company of a big band. Although the projection of his acoustic guitar in the midst of horns is virtually nonexistent, the sensitivity of the recording microphone enabled him to relax and deliver his endless stream of ideas at will. (Recorded July 7, 1943/Swing)

Gaiement (Merry Swing)





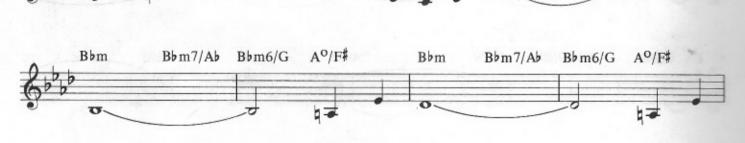


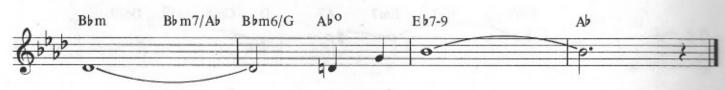




In the spring of 1942, Django and the QHCF were performing at afternoon tea-dances in the Paris nightclub, Le Doyen. While they were playing it was possible to look out of the great bay windows and see the trees along the Champs Elysees. It is from this view that Django found the inspiration one afternoon to compose *Lentement Mademoiselle*. (Recorded March 31, 1941/Swina)







It's not known whether Django ever found his "dream castle," but these sounds prove that he knew what to look for. One of the simplest of all his melodies, it is nevertheless beauty in its most celestial fashion. (Recorded February 17, 1943/Swing)

Manoir De Mes Reves (Django's Castle)

By Django Reinhardt Medium Ballad (= 120) A13-9/Bb D6/9 A13-9/Bb D6/9 A13-9/Bb D6/9 A13-9/Bb Am7 D13-9/Eb G6/9 A7 D6/9 D6/9 Bm7 E9 Bb7 A13-9 D6/9 A13-9/Bb D6/9 A13-9/Bb D6/9 A13-9/Bb Am7 D9 D13-9/Eb G6/9 E9 Fm7 Bb7 Em7 A7 G‡º D Gm6 D6/9

Longing and Romantic, Loves Melody is a creative work of art—pure Reinhardt. Originally recorded in 1943 by a small orchestra with a string section, this beautiful marriage of melody and harmony is Django's piece de resistance. (Recorded February 1, 1946/Swing)

Melodie Au Crepuscule



The music of Claude Debussy provided a continued source of inspiration for Django (listen to Django's guitar solo—Improvisation #2). Debussy's influence is most predominant in this concert piece, especially the presence of the flute. (Recorded March 31, 1942/Swing)





Django incorporated many effects in his rhythm guitar playing. Tremolo chords, staccato accents, and one which dates back to the original QHCF, shuffle rhythm. This eight-to-the-bar, rolling effect is the accompaniment to a very unorthodox melody. Performed with two clarinets, this jumpy line with its shuffle rhythm backing, produces some interesting, though peculiar, results. (Recorded December 17, 1940/Swing)



Bend A A Gm7

Django recorded this bouncy number with the Belgian orchestra of Fud Candrix, while they were on tour in Paris. Though it beckons to the sounds of the late 30s dance bands, it shows Django's continued interest in the big band sound as a means of expressing his own ideas. The arrangement (utilizing the flute) was conceived by Django, playing each instrument's part on his guitar for clarinetist Gerard Leveque to annotate. (Recorded March 12, 1943/Swing)



Recorded three times throughout the 1940's, Django surrounds the blues with a very unique rhythmic interlude and a wonderfully melodic bridge. Considering the diversity of each of these sections, Django created a composition that blends magnificently and instinctively swings. (Recorded November 1947/Vogue)



Whether it's a glimpse of a future rhythm or not, the composition itself is unique in concept and structure and certainly hasn't been duplicated to this day. Though the flat five chord forms the harmonic basis for the piece, melodically it lends itself to a C augmented chord. Section B is an exercise in rapid arpeggio picking (three down strokes, one up). (Recorded October 1, 1940/Swing)

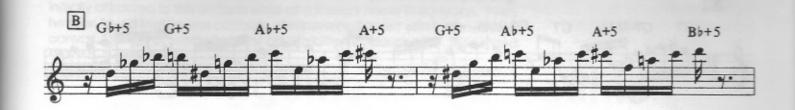












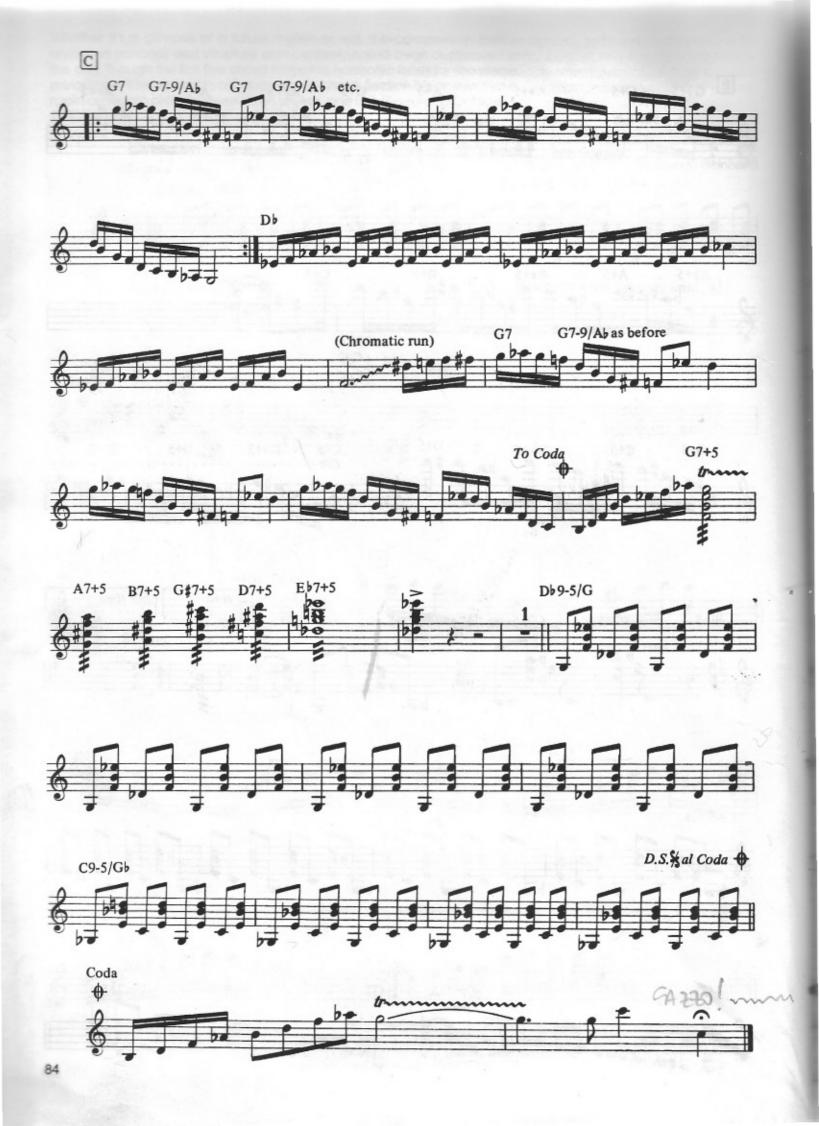












At the time of this recording, Django rarely performed and almost certainly wasn't playing his guitar. Instead, he preferred to spend his time painting. Initially attracted to this art form while at a friend's home in early Jan. 1946, he soon found that he was capable of expressing himself with the brush and canvas. Django presented his first art exhibition in March 1947. (Recorded May 15, 1946/Swina)

Swingtime In Springtime



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One of four years Django remembered in song (the others being 1939, 42 and 43). The diminished chord was a source from which Django developed many ideas. He utilized it in his improvisations and compositions. His solo is often playful, but still contains long breathtaking phrases (bars five and thirteen). (Recorded December 13, 1940/Swing)





The melody is Django's tribute to his idol, Louis Armstrong. Created one evening while imitating Armstrong's vocal style, this composition is Django's personal statement, capturing the essence of Armstrong's joyous swing. (Recorded September 11, 1941/Swing)



In 1948, Django purchased a Webster recorder and it was on this machine that he subsequently recorded his concert performance at the Theatre des Galeries in Brussels. It was at this concert that *Cadillac Slim* was performed. *Slim* has been credited in the past to both Benny Carter and Ben Webster, and although Django's melody differs slightly from theirs, it's more than likely that he borrowed this one. (Recorded December 1948/Vogue)



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Composed by Django while on a tour of Germany in 1947, it was originally titled *Tell Mozart*. The extended use of augmented chords was a challenge for Django's improvisational skills and it's thrilling to hear how melodic he remains while soloing. (Recorded November 14, 1947/Swing)

Diminushing



*For B section of melody, don't play rhythm chords.

Otherwise known as *Moppin the Bride*, Django takes swing and bop on a honeymoon with this jazzy version of the wedding march. (Recorded November 1947/Vogue)

Danse Nuptiale (Moppin' The Bride)



In February 1948, Django, Stephane and the QHCF performed as part of the Nice Festival of Jazz, the world's first jazz festival. To commemorate the event, Django composed this bebop flavored number for a recording session the following month. (Recorded March 10, 1948/Swing)



Folie A Amphion



The chord changes to *I Got Rhythm* (and its variations) seem destined to remain a source of study, experimentation and challenge to the jazz musician. They provide a natural foundation for a line of riff. *Micro* is one of over a half dozen reasons Django came up with to improvise over "rhythm" changes. (Recorded March 10, 1948/Swing)

Micro











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From the "Surprise-Partie" radio show, the entire session (seven recordings) features Django on acoustic guitar. This version of *Blues Clair* is his most extended solo performance on record (thirteen choruses). (Recorded August 25, 1947/Vogue)

Blues Clair (1947)



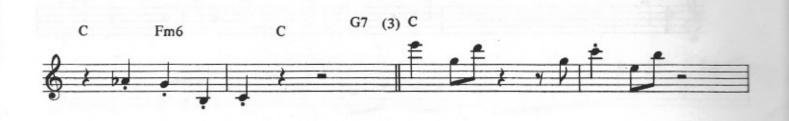






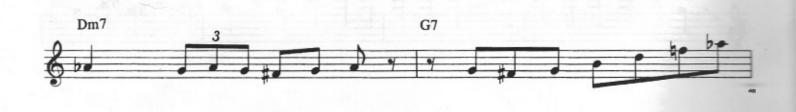










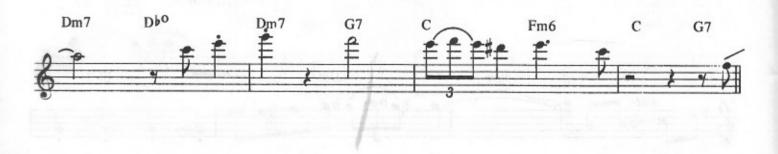


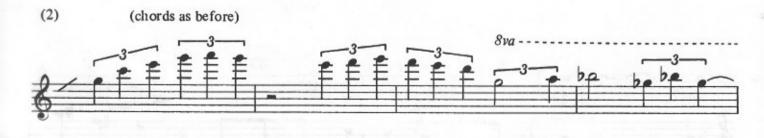


A selection from the all-string QHCF's final recording session. Having reorganized in March 1947, it existed just a few days short of a year, closing a great musical chapter, brimming with creativity, unique in concept. The three choruses (out of five) enclosed are Django's swinging excursion into the blues. (Recorded March 10, 1948/Swing)

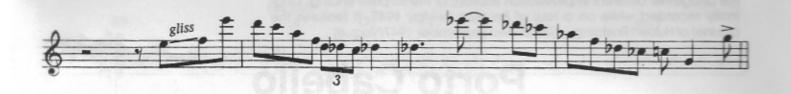








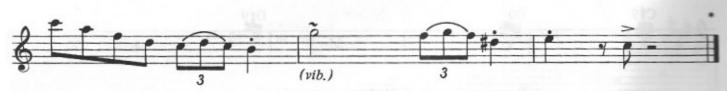












* 2 additional choruses omitted

The opening bolero rhythm, with its wistful melody, doesn't prepare you for the altogether different improvisation section, or the surprise ending. Originally recorded while on a tour of Belgium in May 1947, it features the clarinet of Hubert Rostaing. (Recorded September 1947/Vogue)





Troubland Bolero

By Django Reinhardt







Named for the street number where a friend of Django and Steph's lived. Recorded twice in 1947, each version has a different bridge. The one enclosed is by far the more interesting of the two. (Recorded November 21, 1947/Vogue)



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Django's fifties ballad classic, with echoes of Neal Heffi's *Early Autumn Haunting* though peaceful, the melody is performed by alto saxophonist Hubert Fol, with Django improvising the bridge (ad lib). (Recorded January 30, 1953/Decca)

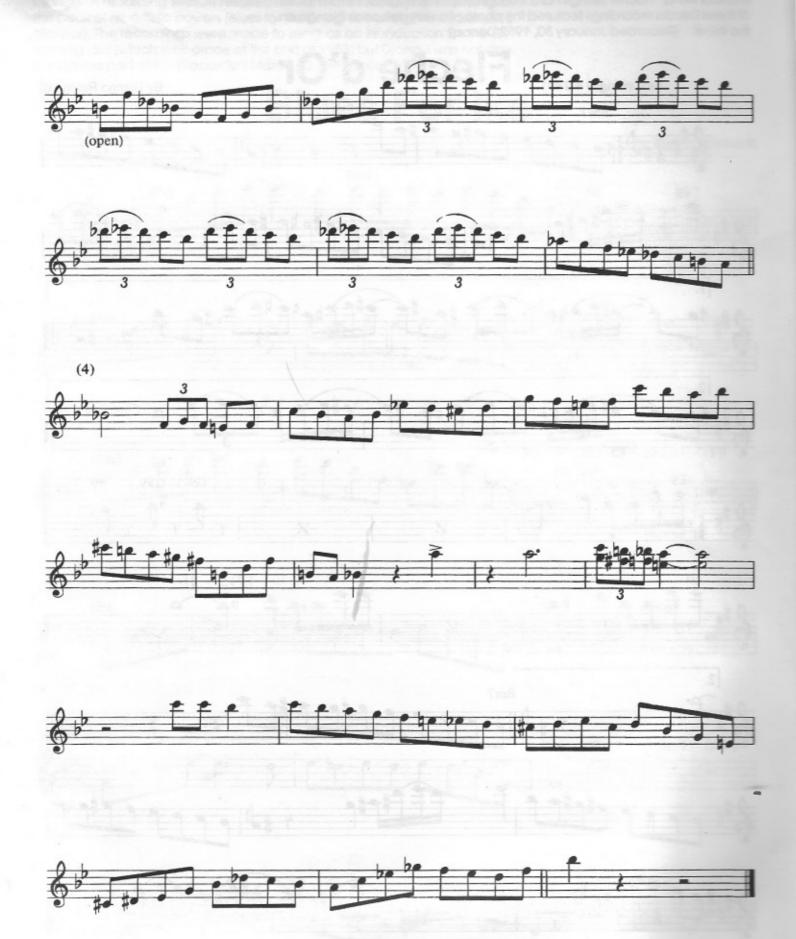


Django's last known recorded piece. This straight ahead twelve bar blues appeared in two takes, this being the first. Django shows no signs of illness here, and is stronger than ever on these four choruses (his complete solo). But in just a little more than a month, his life would be over. (Recorded April 8, 1953/Decca)

Deccaphonie

By Django Reinhardt





The bebop movement rekindled Django's desire to compose. From it grew a new insight into his music, and a deeper understanding of the prevailing musical trend. Fleche swings hard through bop. The original 78 rpm issues of these Decca recordings featured the photo of a very debonair Django on the label. (Recorded January 30, 1952/Decca)



Ian 1953, the celebrated impresario, Norman Granz, was in Paris with his zz at the Philharmonic Tour. This distinguished unit was preparing for a orldwide tour (the first to visit Japan) and plans were made to include ango. A recording session resulted in March, with Django performing at e peak of his artistic powers (Blues for Ike being one of eight indispensible assics). The recordings were made to serve as an introduction for the upiming tour (which took place at the end of 1953) but Django was not desled to be part of it. (Recorded March 10, 1953/Barclay)

Blues For Ike

By Django Reinhardt Moderate blues (= 138) Bb7 Bb 6 Cm7 G7b 9 Dm7 Cm7 C#0 Bb 6/D Eb9 B 67 Bb





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Composed and recorded (though unissued) in mid 1950, it was performed often in 1951 by the "new" Quintet. A gypsy feeling underlies the first sixteen, followed by a rapid fire bridge. Django had no problem composing material such as this, and his blazing technique enabled him to swiftly and logically improvise at these tempos. (Recorded May 11, 1951/Decca)



The club St. Germain was situated in this section of Paris. At the time, Django was staying with his family in the Hotel Crystal across the street from the club, insuring his appearance during this five month engagement. (Recorded January 30, 1952/Decca)

Nuits de St-Germain des Pres

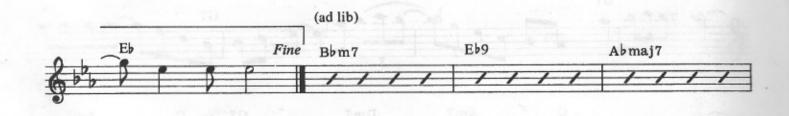
By Django Reinhardt

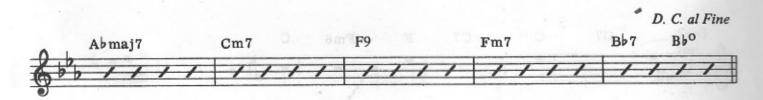












In 1950, Django worked frequently with his friend, saxophonist Andre Ekyan (the premier French swing altoist), whom he knew and recorded with throughout the 1930s and early 40s. Thanks to Ekyan's business perseverance, he and Django toured much of France and eventually settled in Italy. Performing at the "Open Gate" in mid 1950, they recorded thirty titles over a period of two months at RAI studios in Rome. One of his last compositions on his transition from swing to bop, Scotch plays on the changes of I Got Rhythm. (Recorded April/May, 1950/Pathe)

